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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KISL](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: FADHILA LEADER SHIMMARY ON COR INTRIGUES

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Ellen Germain for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: In a May 5 meeting, Fadhilah bloc leader Hassan as-Shimmary and his deputy, Dr. Basim Sharif, hinted at the formation of a new political bloc within the COR, while remaining vague about their intent to join it. Attempting to play down troubling statements that Fadhilah has made about Coalition Forces (CF), the two weakly claimed the statements were taken out of context. Both expressed hope that provincial elections would be held in October, though neither seemed optimistic about that happening. End Summary.

¶2. (C) When asked if rumors of a new political bloc were true, Dr. Basim would only state that, "things will be interesting in the COR." When pressed, Dr. Basim and Shimmary acknowledged that they were aware of moves to create a new COR coalition, but claimed not to know all the players involved. Asked whether they intended to join this bloc, Dr. Basim evaded the question, shrugging his shoulders before saying that "Iraq is in a crisis and people are looking for solutions."

¶3. (C) Attempting to downplay Fadhilah's recent statements against CF, including a claim made by Shimmary in the COR in which he alleged that American forces were deliberately targeting Iraqi children in Sadr City, Shimmary and Dr. Basim said that these statements were taken out of context. When Poloff mentioned another statement made by a Fadhilah bloc COR member who had told the press that under no circumstances would Fadhilah support the GOI subsidizing fuel or any other expenses of the "occupier," both Shimmary and Dr. Basim were visibly embarrassed.

¶4. (C) Regarding the elections law, Shimmary said that he had only perused it briefly and would need to study it in more detail. (Note: The law received a first reading May 6). Though both expressed hope that provincial elections would be held in October, neither seemed optimistic about this happening.

CROCKER